

## V. MYTHOLOGY AND FOLKLORE

538 A collection of fifty-eight myths and folktales was recorded in the villages of  
773 Munko Velha and Cabral. The latter community, one of the more conservative  
[114] savannah settlements, was far more productive of traditional lore of all kinds  
and most of the material below was gathered there. Although this chapter represents  
the complete body of oral literature collected in the field, there is undoubtedly  
more available if a wider range of Mundurucu informants were to be  
sampled. Some myths, such as that of the origin of chess collected by Father  
Krusa,<sup>1</sup> were specifically sought, but were unknown to those questioned. Mundurucu  
[178] mythology has undoubtedly undergone considerable attenuation, and there  
may be among the large number of stories no longer extant.

537 The older Mundurucu say that oral literature was formerly much more actively  
773 recounted and transmitted. During the evenings, the elders told tales to all the  
538 assembled men, and children were brought to listen. These sessions are no longer  
frequent, but considerable interest is still manifest among the listeners. A number  
of men and children and usually some women gathered around whenever I found  
an informant with a story. Indeed, without an audience the narrator would not  
put forth his best efforts. The delivery was always quite animated and was  
accompanied by vivid gestures, imitations of animals, and dialogues between  
the personages in the story. The audience gave full attention, and it was con-  
sidered most disrespectful to create any diversion during the narration. All  
[522] laughed readily and spontaneously at the appropriate passages, although many  
had heard the tale several times before.

538 The stories themselves range over a variety of subjects and are told for a number  
773 of purposes. They have been broken down into six major categories to provide  
continuity. This does not represent an attempt toward a systematic classification  
517 of the myths; actually the categories overlap considerably. For example, the  
animal tales are generally told for amusement, but they frequently explain the  
origins of certain species. On the other hand, the Karuakalib cycle is a true  
creation myth and is centered upon the activities of the principal culture hero.

[522] There are numerous passages in this myth cycle, however, that are considered  
highly humorous by both narrators and audiences, and in other incidents animals  
are also created. Similarly, a category of cosmological myths has been included,  
but there are several events in other tales that are also important to an under-  
standing of Mundurucu cosmology.

538 Through all, there is a running theme of the importance of the animal world  
773 to Mundurucu society and of the close interrelation between the two. In many  
tales, animals either have the form of people or are able to take on this form.  
The mythology does more than explain the origin of animal species, for in almost  
all cases the various animals are transformed people. That the species had their  
origin in the human world tends to reinforce the special significance given them  
in ceremonies and the supernatural belief system.

This affinity between animals and humans will be evident in the saga of

<sup>1</sup> *Rev. Rev.*, 1954, pp. 56-57.

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Perimúti, the young man who makes an incredible journey through the forest and returns home more animal than human. The Mundurucú visualize themselves as hunters and voyagers of the forest, and the odyssey of Perimúti has deep meaning for them. They are also warriors, and several of the tales abound with head-hunting episodes and warfare. And some are tales of intersexed strife, which, to a Mundurucú, is one of the most horrible eventualities imaginable.

The reader familiar with European mythology will recognize many thematic similarities, either independently invented or diffused, in Mundurucú tales. And the student of lowland South American mythology and folklore will see in the Mundurucú another example of the widespread dissemination of tales, in whole or in part, throughout the area. No attempt has been made toward any exhaustive distributional analysis of this material, and only a few of the more interesting parallels have been noted.

## THE KARUKAKHÉ CYCLE OF WORLD CREATION

The major creation legends of the Mundurucú revolve around the figure of the culture hero, Karukakhé. Métraux has made the apt suggestion that this personage merits the title of "transformer" rather than "creator" and compares him to Maira, a figure widespread in Tupian mythology.<sup>1</sup> But apart from this rough similarity of roles of the two culture heroes, the Mundurucú creation legends seem to be quite divergent from those of most other Tupian groups. The Tupian grandfather personage, subsumed under the names of Manan, Maira-Manan or Sund, is absent, as are the twins commonly found in Tupian creation myths.<sup>2</sup> Despite these points of difference in the structure of the tales and in the main actors, there are numerous parallels of episode and theme between the Mundurucú creation cycle and the oral literature of Tupian and other South American groups.

The first story of the Karukakhé legend shows a marked resemblance to a Christian-influenced tale collected by Wagley and Galvão among the Tenetehara and entitled by them, "Creation of Wild Pig."<sup>3</sup> In both Tenetehara and Mundurucú versions, a culture hero imprisons a group of people in a wall of feathers and converts them into peccaries. Other Tenetehara resemblances include the widespread emphasis on the tapir as a symbol of virility, as derived no doubt from the size of the genitalia of the male of the species. In one Tenetehara story, a woman marries a tapir,<sup>4</sup> and in the corresponding Mundurucú tale the culture hero transforms his sexually precocious son into that animal. Another widely distributed theme is found in the discovery of humans in the underworld. Nimrodajé relates an Eastern Timbira story in which the discovery is made by a man digging for an armadillo,<sup>5</sup> whereas in the Mundurucú episode the armadillo

<sup>1</sup> Métraux, 1928, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> The Mundurucú denied all knowledge of episodes concerning twins and even claimed that twins were an unknown phenomenon in their own society. It is interesting to note that though other forms of infanticide were freely admitted, they specifically disavowed the killing of twins. They are not and were not a genetically isolated population, and I assume that the practice exists but that there was very strong resistance to giving this information.

<sup>3</sup> Wagley and Galvão, 1949, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Wagley and Galvão, 1949, pp. 148-149.

<sup>5</sup> Nimrodajé, 1948, pp. 247-248.

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himself makes the food. In the further development of the Mundurucu story the culture hero pulls a number of peoples out of the underworld, but his cord breaks and many are left behind. This theme is distributed beyond South America, as in the Magic Flight passage found in the first tale of the Karuwakabi cycle.

## I. KARUWAKABI AND THE WILD PIG

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In times long past, Karuwakabi lived in the village of Urapari. This settlement was not at the site of the modern Urapari, but was some by.

During one dry season Karuwakabi and all the people of the village were out hunting in the forest, where they lived in temporary lean-tos. That of Karuwakabi was separated from those of the other people, and he stayed there alone with his son Karumtan. The people killed a great deal of game, but in that time there were no tapir, wild pig, or wande, capoesira, the only equivalent of the wild pig was the catapi. Karuwakabi, however, hunted the nambé bird to the exclusion of all other game, and every day he sent Karumtan to the lean-to of his sisters to trade his kill for game that their husbands had taken. On the first three days that Karumtan went to the lean-to of his aunts, they said to him, "We do not have any meat, but we will get you some." On the fourth day the aunts became angry with the boy and said to him, "Your father hunts only nambé which is no good to eat, and we always have to give you food. We do not have any." Karumtan began to cry and went away. The aunts called him back, offering him food, but he would not return.

The boy returned home crying, and Karuwakabi asked him what had happened. He replied that the aunts had scolded him because the nambé did not please them. Karuwakabi said, "They will pay for this," and sent his son outside to gather the feathers of the parrot, the mutim, the joré, and the nambé and to bring them back to him. There were many feathers outside, for Karuwakabi had killed many birds, and the boy gathered them and brought them back. The father then transformed his son into a small bird, the *tsudirvu-jajet*, and sent him out to surround the lean-to of all the other people with the feathers. In this disguise, Karumtan flew around the lean-to and planted the feathers in the ground, quills first. As he went about his task, he sang the song of the bird. He was nearly out of feathers when someone in one of the lean-tos called out, "Who is that singing out there," and threw a piece of burning firewood at him. The boy flew away and returned to his father.

Karuwakabi asked the returned son, "Did you put all the feathers in the ground?" The boy said that he had not finished, and his father sent him out for more feathers. He replenished his supply and finished his task in two more days.

Upon completion of his chore, Karumtan reported to Karuwakabi, and the latter told him, "Now go back and tie the feathers together at the top." For this purpose he transformed the boy into a frog and made the feathers grow to a great size. The boy, in the guise of a frog, returned to the encircled lean-to and climbed a tree, singing the song of the frog, "pök, pök, pök..." as he tied the tips of the feathers together. When he finished, the lean-to and their environs

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dabbed a bit of rotten Brazil nut on the mouth of each one. It is because of the animals who made the vaginas that they are of different shapes and sizes today, and it is because of the armadillo that the female organ smells as it does. 539\*

## 6. HOW KARUMAKAIHÓ MADE THE SKY AND FINALLY AVENGED HIMSELF AGAINST DAIIRÍ

Now Karumakaihó resumed his plans to rid himself of the armadillo-trickster, Daiirí. One day he invited Daiirí to accompany him to bathe. On the way, Karumakaihó told him, "Carry a flat stone." The armadillo picked up a flat stone and carried it in his hands. "No," said Karumakaihó, "carry it on your head." As soon as Daiirí had placed the flat stone on his head, Karumakaihó caused the stone to grow in diameter. It grew and grew, and, in order to support it, Daiirí braced his hands beneath it. As it grew larger Daiirí cried out, "It is heavy." When the armadillo could no longer support it, Karumakaihó caused both him and the stone to rise high into the air. This great, flat stone is now the sky.

Karumakaihó then made roots grow from Daiirí's nose and implant themselves in the earth; the armadillo thus became transformed into the apoi, a tall tree of the jungle. It is this tree which to this day supports the sky, although nobody knows where it is.

## TEN BOOKS: MUNDURUCU VERSION

The following six tales are among the most delightful collected; they are also of great value for an understanding of the processes of integration and creativity in myth-making. The first three syncretize the story of Adam and Eve with Mundurucu themes, and the last three represent a similar integration of New Testament themes. 538 • 171

Karumakaihó and Tupan are interchangeable in these stories, and the same narrator frequently used both names to designate the same person. The first tale of the cycle, "The Creation of Adjam and Eva," has become a continuation of the account entitled "Karumakaihó Makes More Women." An interesting reversal of Biblical events occurs in that Adjam, or Adam, is made from Eve's rib.

The second story, "The Origin of Work," appears to be an aboriginal myth integrated with that part of the Biblical punishment for original sin that commands that man shall live by the sweat of his brow. Koch-Grünberg recorded a similar story of tools that worked by themselves among the Taulipang,<sup>6</sup> and Nimuendaji found the same theme in an Eastern Timbira tale.<sup>7</sup> Neither story betrays European influence, nor does that collected by Wagley and Galvão among the Tenetehara.<sup>8</sup> The aboriginality of the theme in eastern South America is further corroborated by Métraux's reference to the belief in a land where there is no work as an essential part of the ancient Tupian myth of the "terre-cannibal."<sup>9</sup> Granted that the legend is aboriginal to the Mundurucu also, they have then adopted and embellished that part of the Book of Genesis which had meaning

<sup>6</sup> Koch-Grünberg, 1927, pp. 133-137.

<sup>7</sup> Nimuendaji, 1946, p. 244.

<sup>8</sup> Wagley and Galvão, 1948, p. 182.

<sup>9</sup> Métraux, 1923, pp. 208-209.

for them. By the same principle, Eve's consumption of the forbidden fruit becomes a minor theme in the third story, and the main activity of the devil-serpent is to teach Adam and Eve the art of sexual intercourse.

The three New Testament stories are all interpretations of Christ's death and ascent to Heaven. In the last two versions, Karumakihé, who in this case is equated with God the Son and not God the Father as in the Genesis tales, is accused of sorcery and is slain by his followers. Like Christ, he arises from the dead and has further adventures. In two of these stories Karumakihé-Tupac-Christ endows the white people with their technological superiority. The Mundurucú still look upon their own backwardness as the result of Karumakihé's anger.

The last story of the cycle has integrated more European content than have the others. Karumakihé is specifically mentioned as visiting America and Germany, the respective native lands of the author and the missionaries. He roasts he made salt water and ice, both of which are but dimly understood by the Mundurucú. One episode substitutes domestic fowl for the fishes and herons of the Sermon on the Mount, but the resulting creation was not used to feed the multitude.

#### 7. THE CREATION OF ADJUN AND EVA

When Karumakihé, or Tupac as he is known by the priests, made the women out of clay, he also made a little house in which he locked the unfinished clay dolls. When he opened the house again, the dolls had all turned into adolescent girls.

There were already men at that time, and one of these men discovered the girls and seduced one. Karumakihé asked who had had coitus with the girl, and when he found out, he made the man marry her. As the girls grew to maturity, the culture here gave one to each man. Eventually, all the men had wives, and only a girl named Eva was left without a mate. Karumakihé decided to make a man for her. He took one of her ribs while she was asleep, turned it into a man, and placed him beside her. In the morning she awoke to find Adjun.

Karumakihé told Adjun that Eva was his woman and was given to him to help him. He left a quantity of fruit with them, but instructed them not to eat any.

#### 8. GARDEN OF WORK

Karumakihé sent Adjun to the forest to make a garden. Adjun did not, however, have to do any physical labor, for Karumakihé gave him machetes that worked by themselves and did not require a human arm to swing them. But he instructed Adjun to refrain from spying upon the work of the machetes.

Adjun, however, was overcome by curiosity and peeped at the activity of the machetes, whereupon they all broke. When Karumakihé saw that nothing had been done in the new garden, he made Adjun do the work himself. And he warned Adjun that his children after him would also suffer for his disobedience. From then on it would be hot, and people would sweat and develop callouses on their hands.

Karumakihé then gave axes to Adjun and again told him that the axes would do the work themselves as long as they were not spied upon. Adjun again looked, the axes broke, and Karumakihé ordered him to fell the trees himself. Adjun

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sorrow. The men of the village went to his house to kill him, but Karumakahi was aware of their intent and transformed himself into a weak old man who could not even walk. They came again, and Karumakahi turned himself into a very old woman, and again the men left out of compassion. On the third occasion, Karumakahi again made himself into an old man, but this time the men slew him with their bows and arrows and left him.

Some days later the village men visited Karumakahi's grave and found him sitting on the ground, alive and young again. He then left them and ascended into the sky.

To this day it is dangerous to live on the site of Karumakahi's old village of Taniptari, for down below is the underworld from which the people were drawn. This underworld is like the present world of the Mundurucu, but it has cities, steamboats, and other wonderful things. If one were to live about this world, the land would sink and in its place a river would flow.

#### 12. KARUMAKAHÍ LEAVES THE WORLD: THIRD VERSION

The people were angry and suspicious toward Karumakahi (Tupan) because he did many strange things and had great power over people. They shot him with arrows and buried him, placing over his grave thorns and great stones. However, he came to life again and burst out of the tomb with such force that the hills of the Mundurucu country were formed.

Tupan is now in the sky. On the way he visited America and Germany. During his travels he made salt water and turned water into ice so that he could cross it. He also created many kinds of animals. On one occasion he killed a hen, split it, and put it on the fire. He cut one of the halves into many little pieces and blew upon them. Each piece turned into a hen or a rooster and flew away. One of the roosters saw Tupan as he flew away and cried, "There goes Santa Antonio rising."

Tupan arrived at a house and asked for water and manioc flour. The people did not know who he was and gave him only water. Tupan said, "Their garden is going to grow." He turned his back and walked away, and the garden turned into stone. He went on and arrived at another house. These people gave him manioc flour and water. Tupan said, "This garden is going to become all overgrown." But the opposite happened, and the garden yielded abundantly. The first people were angry at Tupan and thought him a sorcerer. Those who were kind to him said, "Ah, but our grandfather is good!"

#### CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES

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The following nine tales deal in part with cosmological themes. The cycle of tales concerning the activities of Karumakahi and Wakurumpé explains the visage of the sun, but differentiates its physical appearance from the sun spirit, or its ultimate reality. The visible sun, we learn, is really a dual phenomenon that consists alternately of the heads of Karumakahi and Wakurumpé. The tale (15) explaining this shares certain motifs with the widely distributed "Rolling Head"

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myth. But in other stories in which detached heads become astral bodies, the heads are usually transformed into the moon." The most interesting episode in these stories, however, is the clearly delineated Oedipus theme in tale 11. The myth bears some resemblance to one collected by Nimondajé among the Eastern Timbiris in which a star takes pity upon a young but ugly man." The latter story, however, has two brothers playing the roles of the brothers-in-law in the Mandaracu account.

The stories of Nung-ung are likewise concerned with origins in that they explain the prevalence of flood at certain seasons and the origin of the Milky Way. But the latent theme of sibling rivalry that runs through this myth cycle is quite strong. Tales 16 and 17 tell how Nung-ung's wife (and patrilineal cross cousin in the second version) left him for his younger brother, and in tale 18 Nung-ung copulates with the brother's wife and is killed by him in revenge.

The two remaining stories of this group are unrelated to these two myth cycles. One gives an account of how the spirit, the Mother of the Rain, appeared in the guise of an old woman and created the abundant fruit of the forest. The other portrays of the widely distributed theme that the night was once very short and became long through human intervention. The responsible person is transformed into a bird of the night in the Mandaracu account, as he is in native myths collected by Nimondajé\* and by Costa de Magalhães."

## 11. TRANSFORMATION OF KARUTACUÍ AND WAKURUPÍ

Once upon a time there lived two men, named Karutacuí and Wakurupí, who were married to each other's sisters. The latter was a man of normal appearance, but Karutacuí was very ugly. He was so ugly that his wife no longer wanted him and not only refused to accept his kill of fish and game, but had relations with another man.

One day the men of the village went to a stream far in the forest to fish with timbú. When the others returned, Karutacuí remained in the shelter that they had built and contemplated his unhappy situation. He was disgusted with life and reluctant to return to a wife who did not want him. As he was sitting there, the Sun came with his wife and asked him what he was doing. "Nothing," replied Karutacuí, "I am only sitting here because my wife has relations with another man and no longer wants me because of my ugliness."

The Sun wished to verify the truth of this and told his own wife to have coitus with Karutacuí in order to see if he was capable of pleasing a woman. The wife tried him out, but his penis was soft and would not enter. She went back and reported this to the Sun. To see if his wife was telling the truth, he passed his hand down the front of her body and then down her back to see if he could bring out semen. Nothing could be discovered, and he knew his wife told the truth.

\* See Balda, 1946, pp. 104-109.

\* Nimondajé, 1944, p. 243.

\* Nimondajé, 1915, p. 237.

\* Costa de Magalhães, 1935, pp. 231-232.

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into the village. He shouted to the villagers to bring fire, but nobody heard him, <sup>539<sup>A</sup></sup> and he then turned into the *curajão da noite* (a bird). When he flew away he took the thread of day with him, and nobody knows to this day where it is. That is why the nights are so long.

## II. WOMEN OF THE RAIN

In times past wounded warriors used to turn into shamans during the period of their disability and wandered over the world in this form. One of these warriors was once walking along a path when he met an old woman who was really the Mother of the Rain. He said to her, "Where are you going, old woman?" The woman, who was carrying an empty basket on her back replied, "I am going to gather fruit," and she named many species of fruit that she intended to collect. As she turned away the warrior pulled on her basket, dragging it to the ground. Out of the empty basket tumbled so much fruit that the warrior could not eat it all; she had created this fruit to demonstrate her power to the wounded man. The angry old woman then exclaimed, "You are not a real shaman. You have only become one for a short time, and only because you went to war and were wounded." She then continued on her way, but since that time there has been an abundance of fruit in the forest, whereas there previously had been but little.

## CULTURAL INVENTIONS AND INNOVATIONS

The following myths are specifically concerned with explaining cultural innovations. The first two are the longest and, to the Mandaracá, the most important and account for the origin of the sacred trumpets and of horticulture. The first is a true social charter, for it validates the ascendancy of the male in Mandaracá society. It reveals also the basic insecurity of the male position; the women once owned the instruments and the men can retain them only by force. In short, the male role is felt to be subject to constant threat. The reader will immediately recognize the almost globally distributed theme associated with sacred musical instruments forbidden to the eyes of women. <sup>538 •</sup>  
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The myth of the origin of horticulture and domesticated plants makes a clear association between these aspects of culture and womanhood and nurture of the young. The story demonstrates an obvious congruence not only with the female principle in fertility, but with the primary role of the woman in horticulture.

## III. INVENTION OF THE SACRED TRUMPETS

The sacred trumpets of the Mandaracá, called the *karúá*, are taken to the night of women, but the women once owned them. In fact it was the women who first discovered the trumpets. <sup>599<sup>A</sup></sup>

There were once three women named Yanyabíri, Tucmbíri, and Parawarí. When these women went to collect firewood, they frequently heard music from some unknown source. One day they became thirsty and went off in search of water. Deep in the forest they found a beautiful, shallow, and clear lake, of which they had no previous knowledge. This lake came to be named *Karúáheptí*.

- \* 539 Murakibibi made the paintings on the Murre de Castagnie, on the Tapajó River.<sup>1</sup> He and Murakirawibi then went to the lands downstream.

## ADVENTURES AND SAGES

- 538 The following tales are not greatly concerned with supernaturally implemented transformations and innovations, although such events do occur within their contexts. And they are not creation epics in the sense of the cycle of Karunkaibibi. The first (tale 29) is the story of a boy who is tricked by his mother's brother and, as a result, accomplishes a journey fraught with a number of hardships and successive dangers. He finally reaches home, but his experiences have left him more animal than human. This is clearly indicated at the end of the story when he kills his own pet birds, for no Mundurucu would kill a pet any more than he would his own children. The story is reminiscent of a Tukuna tale related by Nimuendaji, in which a woman is lost in the forest and has various adventures with animals, returning home bereft of reason.<sup>2</sup> A Tembé tale collected by Nimuendaji has even more close affinity to the Mundurucu story.<sup>3</sup> A boy undergoes a similar odyssey and returns home with the personality of the catfish. The story of Perinait probably indicates more clearly than do the ceremonies for the game-animal spirits that the Mundurucu feel that their own actual way of life connects them very closely with the animal world. The human and animal spheres are conceived as symbiotic to each other, and their memberships are interchangeable under certain circumstances.

That the Mundurucu and Tembé sagas are historically connected is manifest in an episode common to both, in which the lost boy crosses a river on the back of a giant alligator. The tale of Perinait has other widely distributed elements. The motif of fowls that speak can be found in much of native South American folklore, and the theme of the man with the sharpened leg bone is encountered far beyond the limits of the continent.

Tales 30 to 33 are united by the common theme of intersex conflict. The first relates the estrangement of two brothers and the growth of hostility and suspicion between them owing to the failure of one to join in common ventures with the other. This attitude toward the deviant and the nonparticipant is still active in contemporary Mundurucu society and is a potent agent in the enforcement of cooperation and communality. If such a person is also a shaman, his behavior is frequently sufficient to bring accusations of sorcery. The tale (30) continues to develop the growing hostility between the two brothers until its culmination in head-hunting attacks on each other's villages. During one episode, one of the brothers has sexual intercourse with the wife of the other as in the cycle of Nung-nung stories (tale 18). But unlike that legend, one brother cuckold the other for the specific purpose of revenge, thus providing one illustration of the strong component of covert aggression in Mundurucu adultery.

<sup>1</sup> Some informants attributed the cliff paintings to Karunkaibibi. I have seen those on the Murre de Castagnie. They are clearly animal representations and are indeed in a seemingly inaccessible place. The paintings undoubtedly predate the Mundurucu occupation of this territory.

<sup>2</sup> Nimuendaji, 1922, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Nimuendaji, 1915, p. 239.

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The story (II) of the origin of the Parikitot tribe repeats the theme of the isolated and antisocial person who finally breaks out into open aggression against his fellows. These are terrible acts to the Mandurucu, and it is interesting to note how the dilemma is resolved. In tale II to II, the persons guilty of intra-tribal conflict leave the Mandurucu country, and their descendants form enemy tribes. The offenders in tale II are killed in warfare, and they die without issue. Thus, although fratricidal conflict is thought by the Mandurucu to have occurred in the past, the guilty parties and their heirs were subsequently completely expunged from the society.

## 29. THE CASE OF FURURU: A MANDURUCU STORY

At one time there lived a boy named Akainotpi, who had an uncle (mother's brother) named Karajuribi. The boy liked to hunt with his uncle and called to his grandmother every day as they left for the forest. "Grandmother, I am going to bring back the tripe of a tapir." Before setting out on the hunt one morning, the uncle, Karajuribi, told Akainotpi to give him his arrows for sharpening. The uncle sharpened the arrows and they left.

On the path the uncle said to Akainotpi, "Go ahead, I am going to stop to defecate." But this was only a ruse, and the uncle circled ahead of the nephew and transformed himself into a deer to test the boy's hunting skill. Upon spying the deer Akainotpi called back, "Uncle, there is a deer here." When he received no response to his cries, he decided to shoot the animal himself. The uncle had foreseen this eventuality and had sharpened the point in such a way that the arrow would not enter. The unharmed deer ran away and became retransformed into the uncle. When the uncle returned, Akainotpi said to him, "Uncle, there was a deer here, and I shot him but the arrow did not enter." The uncle replied, "I did not hear you call, but it seems that the deer has gone. Let us look for another." When they returned to the house at the end of the day, the boy told his grandmother what had happened.

Every time thereafter that the boy accompanied his uncle on the hunt, the latter turned himself into various species of wild life. One day the uncle turned himself into the deer and appeared before the boy. However, Akainotpi had sharpened his own arrows on this occasion and the arrow entered the body of the deer. The deer fell over as if dead, and the lad tied its legs with *sipi* (jungle vine) and placed it over his shoulders and set out for home. On the way he grew tired, put the deer on the ground and lay down to rest. The deer came back to life and freed its legs easily from the weak vine used to tie him. Transformed again to a human, the uncle returned home shortly after the boy.

Before the next hunt the boy said again to his grandmother that he would bring back the tripe of the tapir. The grandmother replied that if he really wanted to kill the tapir, he should put his arm up the animal's anus and pull out the tripe. The boy misunderstood and did not know whether the tapir should be dead or alive when this was done. He went again to the forest with his uncle, and this time the latter disguised himself as a tapir. The boy shot the tapir and, although the arrow did not enter, the tapir feigned sleep. Thinking the tapir

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multitude of other beasts of every species who were also pursuing the woman and her daughter, intent upon eating them. 597x

After the frog had shot and killed all the animals, he ordered the woman to skin them and to put their meat on the balbrint and their hides in the fire. She did this, and there were so many that she was completely blackened with soot when she finished. Then the frog told her, "Go take a bath, but look only upstream and do not look behind you." He did not explain this order to her. The woman went to the stream and bathed, and the dirt from her body turned the stream black. This dirt was acting upon the fish like timber, and they began to come to the surface, beating their tails three times before dying. The woman heard this sound and turned around to see what it was. All the fish immediately came back to life again and swam away. At this point the frog came down to the stream to collect the dead fish. When he saw that there were none, he asked the woman if she had looked around. She admitted that she had, and the frog told her that if she had not done this people would not have to go into the forest in search of wild timber. Instead, fish would have been killed by the dirt from the bodies of bathing women.

## 25. THE MAN WHO LIVED ON SMOKE

There was once a man whose only food was tobacco smoke. Without tobacco smoke he would die. He was so dependent upon tobacco that, when he ran out of it, he filled a gourd with smoke and drank from it.

One day he went to the forest to get Brazil nuts and brought along some tobacco and a gourd full of smoke. He smoked all the tobacco during the journey and began to drink the smoke from the gourd. He drank sparingly, but still he consumed all the smoke when only halfway up the tree. Since he could not live without it, he fell down to the ground dead. However, his body disappeared.

To this day people must plant tobacco only among the burned pieces of wood that lie about in the garden.

## TALES OF ANIMALS AND PEOPLE

This last group of legends includes a somewhat varied assortment of stories 598 • that concern animals or people or, commonly, the two in interaction. The first story explains that dogs originated from a union between a girl and a dog in human form. Two other stories also deal with the domesticated dog. In tale 57 two dogs burst out of the eyes of a burning demon, and tale 50 tells how the inhabitants of the Land of Dogs took revenge upon a Mundurucu by feeding him bones.

Tales 37 to 40 are united by the common theme of hostility between father-in-law and son-in-law, an antagonism that seldom erupts into open quarrels in Mundurucu society. The story entitled "The Origin of the Alligator" tells of a man who eats his son-in-law, but who is finally outwitted by a son-in-law 171 606 who escapes a series of traps. The structure of the tale bears a strong resemblance to a Tenechara legend about a vulture father-in-law and to two Tukuna myths

\* Wagley and Gubée, 1946, pp. 150-151.

- 599 collected by Nimuendajú. "The Man Who Married the Guariba Monkey" is in many respects almost identical with a folktale of the same name reported by Roth from the Arawak of British Guiana. An interesting note in the Mundurucú version is an incestuous union between the monkey woman and her son. Tale 39 deals with the mercurial father-in-law's attempts to imitate the feats of his son-in-law and his consequent death. The story is clearly linked to the Temetehara "Opuscula Takes a Son-in-law." Another variation of the theme of union between two species is found in tale 40, in which the deer unknowingly marries a jaguar-girl. A similar story is reported from the Tukuna,<sup>6</sup> both Mundurucú versions include an episode in which the son-in-law must maintain a normal demeanor in the face of the wife's family.

- 598 Included in the following collection are four stories about the land tortoise, a notorious prankster in the folklore of the Amazon. Tales about the land tortoise are well represented in collections of Brazilian oral literature, and Charles F. Hartt devoted an entire volume to these stories.<sup>7</sup>

Three stories concern humans who made love to animals. Although this is a common theme in the region, it is worth while to note that the Mundurucú story of a man's love for a cloth has parallels in Cavina<sup>8</sup> and Guiana Arawak<sup>9</sup> folklore. Also, stories of a liaison between a woman and a snake are found among both the Mundurucú (tale 49) and the Temetehara.<sup>10</sup>

The last two stories in this section are of great interest. Tale 57 is an obvious rendition of the story of Hansel and Gretel, although the actors are spiders, and the wicked witch appears as a Yurupari. It should be noted that the cruel stepmother is missing in the Mundurucú version, as she is in the legend "Babe in the Wood," collected by Wagley and Galvão among the Temetehara.<sup>11</sup> Finally, it is fitting that the last Mundurucú myth (58) to be related should be the one that explains their acceptance of the whites. Although the idea that the Mundurucú once owned the present site of the city of Belém has no basis in truth, it is quite accurate to attribute their involvement with the whites to their desire for manufactured articles. This realism is consistent with the common recognition of the modern Mundurucú that needs are cumulative.

#### 26. ORIGIN OF THE DOG

- X599 Dachehoré had arrived at her first menage. She therefore stayed in the house alone when her mother went to the garden and her two brothers set out for the hunt. After they had all left, a young man entered the house. His name was Karupitubi, and he was not a human at all but a dog in human form. However, at that time there were no dogs in the villages of people as there are today.

<sup>6</sup> Nimuendajú, 1952, pp. 145-146.

<sup>7</sup> Roth, 1915, p. 71.

<sup>8</sup> Wagley and Galvão, 1949, pp. 131-134.

<sup>9</sup> Nimuendajú, 1952, p. 150.

<sup>10</sup> Hartt, 1973.

<sup>11</sup> Nordenskiöld, 1924, p. 290.

<sup>12</sup> Roth, 1915, p. 204. This story is slightly variant in that a woman loves a male cloth.

<sup>13</sup> Wagley and Galvão, 1949, p. 143.

<sup>14</sup> Wagley and Galvão, 1949, pp. 163-165.